

In the last two or three years, particularly since the McKay killing, it has expanded West into working class suburbs where by all accounts a high level of drug use is settling in amongst the unemployed. They're an ideal target. Heroin's only virtue as a drug is that it narcotises you, it makes you insensitive to a strong physical or emotional sensations. It's chief virtue is to wrap you into a timeless cocoon. If ~~if~~ you're unemployed and bored it makes time go.

JS: Isn't it also pleasurable; as an opium derivative isn't there some of the Kublai Khan in it?

AM: In Asia if you're a man of 25 and you're an opium user you're considered a pariah; you'll never marry, you'll never be treated seriously. You're simply written off in social terms, even amongst the hill tribes that ~~grow~~ grow it. The tolerance for drug use is reserved for those people who have had it, the old people fifty or above. Why do you have people who are in their physical, mental, ^{sexual} ~~social~~ prime being involved in a drug whose only virtue is to dull all of those sensations?

JS: How do you feel about people who use drugs?

AM: This is not a book about users. In the United States you have currently between half and one million people currently using heroin and several million past users. Is it because they all have dependent personalities? What is a dependent personality? Heroin is used because it is available. In Australia, you're close to the source, purity is 27% in comparison to New York's 3-6%, supply is constant. In the five or six years of high level usage there has never been a "drought". There is no pressure on the system for a number of reasons. To put pressure on the system requires enormous allocation of ~~law~~ enforcement manpower which is not available. There are more American Narcotic enforcement officers in a precinct in central Harlem than there are in the whole of NSW.

JS: Is that because it doesn't really ~~pose~~ pose much ~~of~~ of a problem because the people who are using are dispensable?

AM: That's what the blacks say in America.

JS: What do you think of the idea that drugs are used specifically to keep down a revolutionary element? Keep them doped and they won't cause any trouble.

AM: In this business you've got to sort through enormous numbers of quite extraordinary paranoid delusions. It was popular amongst New Left circles in the U.S. in the seventies to think that the CIA actually controlled the heroin trade. A system is ~~the sum of its parts~~ ^{certain} not the sum of its parts, it is its parts. Because various parts of the CIA has been complicitous in the drug traffic does not mean that the bureaucracy actually plans this. There's a shadow world; a universe of shadows. ~~populated by~~ ^{populated by} In the economy it's an area populated by permanently by bit players, the drug dealers, the prostitutes, the standover thugs, professional car thieves, organised crime groups. Also populating the shadow world are the intelligence groups which more often than we would like to believe make very good use of these organised crime groups. Who else practices their particular kind of clandestine arts. Who else lives in the shadows? Where do you get a basher? The CIA lives in the shadows with organised crime; they do business here there and everywhere together.

JS: Do you analyse that shadow world as a part of capitalism?

AM: It's a separate economy. It's less in the Eastern block because the amount of uncontrolled enterprise is far smaller, although even the Soviet system has from time to time ^{developed} produced enormous shadow worlds. But the less controls you have on a society the more this type of system will grow up. It's a spinoff of a capitalist economic system which allows, in fact encourages privatisation of wealth; and a political system which has a strong respect for civil liberties. You can have authoritarian socialist regimes, you can have authoritarian capitalist regimes. The Phillipines for instance, there is ^{little} very organised crime. Marcos just rounded them all up and shot them. Very simple. In a capitalist society with a healthy respect for civil liberties the shadows tend to lengthen.

towards the criminal. What kind of cannabist idealist is going to make a shift from cannabis to heroin? There were a lot of shonky idealists around, wearing the clothes, making the appropriate signs, who'd sell anything.

JS: Equally there were some real ones.

AM: In anything there are those that are genuine about it and those who are not. With the increased repression and increased customs checks there's a market force which in terms of smuggling pushes things towards heroin. In smuggling bulk is the key question. Heroin is a highly compact. The eradication of domestic cannabis consumption means that the whole market is more dependent on imported products.

JS: I noticed amongst my contemporaries a shift from marijuana into mandrax.

AM: You get polydrug use now. Heroin is expensive. So called heroin addicts in fact have a very erratic pattern of use. It's as much determined by their economic fortunes as their liking for various drugs. Serious levels of unemployment is only a few years old. High levels of heroin use is only a few years old.

JS: Funny when being unemployed means having no money.

AM: Not no money, limited money. It's a question of people with a lot of time, they're bored, they want a buzz. The idealised picture of the mainlining junky getting his/her dose once or twice a day for year upon year is completely falacious. There are very few people who conform to that image. What you have is a spectrum of users; people who may get a buzz on smack once a month, or every weekend. Heroin taken on in small amounts on occasion is not addictive. You have a whole spectrum of dealers and users who are all the way from occasional to fulltime. The phenomenon of heroin abuse mixed up with other drugs is now shifting from its home in the more affluent suburbs, apart from the Kings Cross area which is more of a ghetto phenomena, but in terms of residential use it's been in the beach suburbs, Palm Beach, Whale Beach, and then it spread to Cronulla, Southerland. Mixed up with the Surfy culture.

French were banking the money, they were controlling the system. They were directly involved in it. The CIA were indirectly benefiting from the opium in that they were working through client armies, like the Nationalist Chinese, who then instead of being entirely dependent upon CIA funding were dependent upon the opium funds, so that ~~that~~ lessened the CIA investment in them. That freed funds for other kinds of operation, so they indirectly benefited. Unlike the French who were actually banking the money and acting as pay masters for the opium trade.

JS: It interests me that in your books you deal fairly perfunctorily with the accepted reasons for drug abuse, such as disillusionment with societal values, high unemployment etc. Why is that?

AM: If you were writing a book about the liquor industry in NSW, you would want to know how they manufacture it, how they licence it, distribute it, what the relationships are with unions, the whole struggle over opening and closing hours...the economics. Why people drink is not really a question to you as a researcher who is looking at the marketing side of it. the liquor industry per se. I don't really think you can understand why people drink unless you understand about the advertising, the marketing, the industry behind it. The analysis of why people become alcoholics...they become alcoholics because it is available. Why do people become Vincents abusers? Because it's advertised at them, pushed at them. It does react with their body, it is a drug which will affect their body somehow.

personalised professional services for SP bookmakers, heroin importers, and corrupt corporative executives. Money laundering our speciality."

People are now aware that organised crime is a force in our society.

JS: What sort of reaction have you had to people like the police from a book like yours?

AM: It was not long ago that we had a Police Commissioner in this state that denied that organised crime existed. A couple of steps below that however with people like the Crime Intelligence Unit they are generally very supportive because it gives them another string in their bow. They are ready to expand but need political support. The corrupt officers that are making a fortune out of organised crime don't ring me up and complain.

JS: Anything you want to talk about?

AM: One of the ~~are~~ groups that has been actively concerned about organised crime is the entertainment world. M Be they musicians, actors, entertainers, they have been seriously concerned about organised crime for at least a decade now. Leagues clubs, nightclubs, Kings Cross, all these places are fronts for organised crime activity. If you go on strike an organised crime heavy is going to break your legs. Who wants to live and work in a world of gangsters, thuggery...these people are not equal opportunity employers. They are not keen on unionisation. They don't favour paying a fair days pay for a fair days work. Anybody involved in entertainment or the popular side of the music industry is aware of this.

JS: Is it an unfightable type of thing?

AM: ^Australia is still a small and manageable enough community to make this possible, but I doubt if anything will be done. It's in the too hard basket.

There are a whole broad spectrum of people who have certain types of problems and if you get the drug that meets the problem then people will use it. That's not an issue. In terms of drug abuse the whole analysis of the problem has been on why people use drugs, shock horror Johnny uses drugs. "10 year olds are now using heroin, My God, horror horror horror. These are valid concerns but supposing heroin didn't exist as a commodity, supposing it wasn't on the street, then you wouldn't have a drug problem. 10 years ago Australia had almost no heroin problem. 5 years ago it only had a very small problem, now it has a substantial heroin problem. Have Australians changed that much in 5 years?

JS: I was interested in you saying that Australians have been heavy users of chemicals for over a century, as we were the leading consumers of patent medicines in the 1890s for instance. Is that because we're a repressed society?

AM: Every society is a repressed society. Societies by their very nature are collectives which impinge upon their individual, they are by nature repressive. Every kind of society has certain kinds of drugs or inebriants that individuals use to let off a bit of steam. ^{A lot of} ~~many~~ societies have certain ~~kinds of~~ rituals in which people are allowed to adopt different kinds of behaviour under the influence of these inebriants. That's not to say that the ramifications of a particular kind of drug use are the same. I would say a society that ~~is~~ a society that has a high level of cannabis use is likely to have a different kind of marketing structure and a different kind of social consequence to a society that has a high level of heroin use. This is for all sorts of reasons to do with the pharmacology and economy of the drugs particular use. Not all drugs are equal but the fact that people have for over a century now a high tolerance for the consumption of drugs is not terribly surprising.

JS: It seems quite a jump from Narcotics in S.E. Asia to Organised Crime in Australia.

AM: The first book was an analysis of an area ~~w~~ that wasn't supposed to exist. It was an attempt to map out the ~~x~~ area, the dynamics of its economy, the dynamics of its politics, the warlords, the caravans, the crop, the credits, the corruption, and ultimately sitting on top of it, glossing it over, concealing it, the CIA's compromise relationship with all the players in this ~~unmapped~~ unmapped area. That was really looking at the production, manufacturing and export. At the point heroin left Bangkok I didn't particularly follow. What I was doing in this latest book was picking up the book in Bangkok, now what I'm turning to is the domestic side of the equation. If all that going on in the Golden ~~THH~~ Triangle is what allows heroin to be produced, how can heroin be distributed in an affluent user country. That involves the analysis of organised crime. The books are a pair.

JS: How do you think organised crime will develop in the future?

AM: Take the Nugan Head Bank collapse. That's an investigation which is going to show how it became so large so quickly. As organised crime boomed in the seventies there was the need for a loaning institution. It was one thing to make money out of SP booking, but then how do you ~~move~~ move that money into the financial system so that you can use it for legitimate purposes. You've got to launder it. You can't do that in Australia, you've got to go overseas and come back, places like Hongkong, Singapore or Switzerland where you can put it through a bank account and send it back down again. Whether that involves importing ^e furniture, which a lot of professional criminals in Australia are involved in,. The Nugan Head Bank was merchant banking to the shadow world. You could say Nugan Hands proper advertisement; they proudly style themselves in their advertisement as : "The Nugan Hand international group provides personalised professional services for coprorations, institutions and bsuiness people." That add might have been better phrased: "The Nugan Hand international group, merchandisers to the shadow world, provides

Narcotics are very much a part of the emergence of the modern pharmaceutical industry. The pharmaceutical industry in the Australian context exploited all kinds of ~~mechan~~ mechanisms to make high level drug taking acceptable. Historically it's a result of the transfer of a European culture from a cold climate to a hot one; in those days their only experience with hot climates had been places like Calcutta where in the 1800s they literally dropped like flies.

JS: I was wondering if the highly idealistic movement associated with the late sixties early seventies and with consumption of grass and LSD... if you see any relationship between the decline of that and the decline in the availability of marijuana and LSD to the rising use of heroin.

AM: Yes, there is. I'm not talking about this from the user perspective. And I'm certainly not working on that time honoured controversy about whether marijuana leads to ~~ex~~ the use of heroin. But from a marketing sense it's apparent that the mass marketing of heroin ~~ex~~ created the dealers, the clientelles, the networks for the network to shift from marijuana to heroin and the question then is how did that take place. It's much more a marketing question than a cultural question. After the death of Donald McKay in July 1977 there was a massive nationwide crackdown on domestic cultivation of cannabis and also a nationwide crackdown on importation of cannabis. They applied pressure on the system thinking that it would force the systems collapse. It didn't. What happened was ^{as you call them,} that: ~~the~~ First of all the idealists, the casual marijuana dealers who bought a bit and sold a bit, gave a bit away, smoked among their friends...tended to get out. Particularly when the word came down, no grass but got smack. People who didn't want to handle heroin quit the trade and moved on to other things. The people who stayed were professional criminal syndicates operating in the cannabis trade at larger levels. Also there was a whole new type of petty crim, standover thug, the usual urban heavies that you've got in Sydney and Melbourne...In Sydney they moved quite substantially into drug dealing. You saw then a shift in the social spectrum of drug dealers